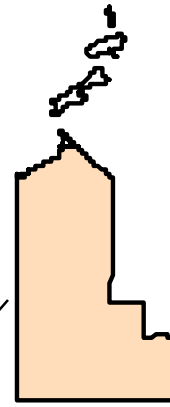
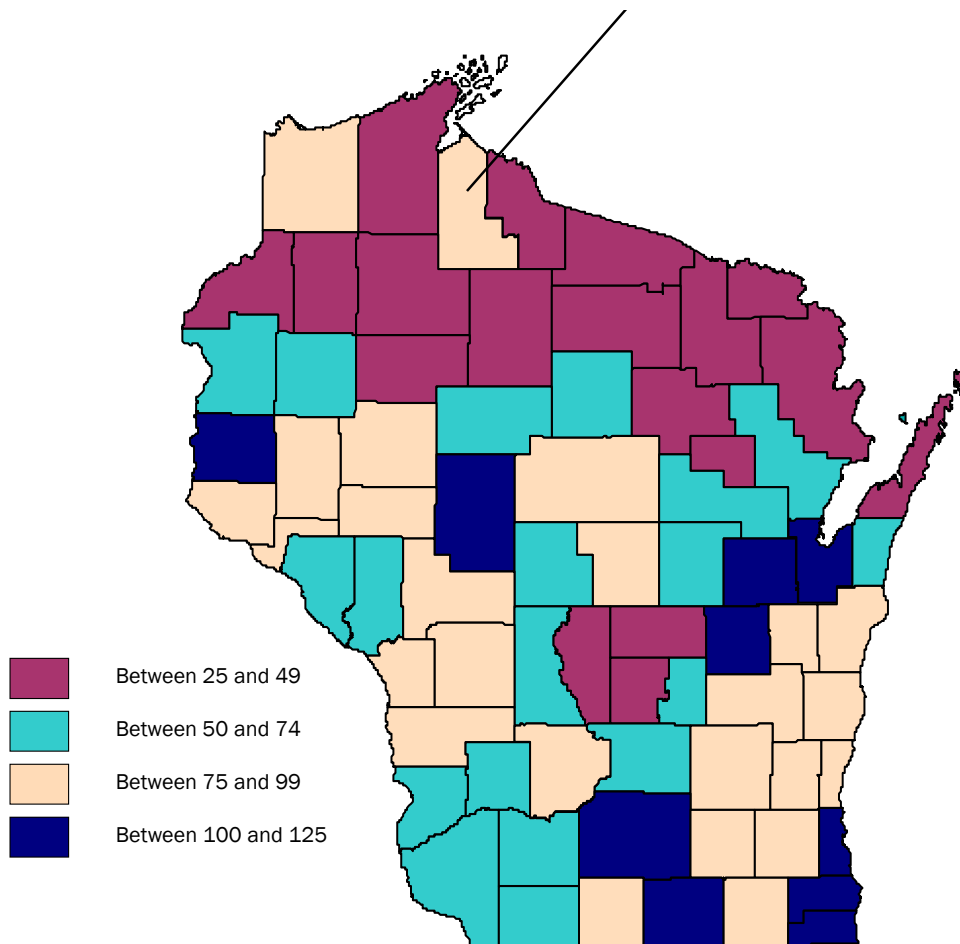


# Ashland County Workforce Profile



The number of residents aged 25-29 years for every  
100 residents aged 60-64 years in year 2025



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center and the U.S. Bureau of Census.

For comparison, it is projected that there will be 90 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 residents aged 60-64 in Wisconsin in 2025. Nationally, it is projected that there will be 101 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 residents aged 60-64. In 2003, Wisconsin had 146 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 aged 60-64.



## County Population

There was continued movement in a positive direction with a small increase in population in Ashland County from 2000 to 2004. Even though the increase totaled just over 100 residents it redirects changes in the population to positive numbers. From 2000 to 2004 the population in Ashland County increased 0.6 percent and ranked second to last among the state's 72 counties for growth. Only eight of the sixteen mu-

### Total Population

	April 2000 Census	Jan. 1, 2004 estimate	Numeric change	Percent change
<b>United States</b>	281,421,906	292,287,454	10,865,548	3.9%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	5,363,715	5,532,955	169,240	3.2%
<b>Ashland County</b>	16,866	16,969	103	0.6%
<b>Largest Municipalities</b>				
Ashland, City*	8,620	8,577	-43	-0.5%
Sanborn, Town	1,272	1,272	0	0.0%
White River, Town	892	927	35	3.9%
Mellen, City	845	834	-11	-1.3%
Jacobs, Town	835	826	-9	-1.1%
Gingles, Town	640	710	70	10.9%
Ashland, Town	603	604	1	0.2%
Morse, Town	515	538	23	4.5%
Agenda, Town	513	507	-6	-1.2%
Chippewa, Town	433	438	5	1.2%

\*Ashland County portion only

Source: Wis. Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services and U. S. Census Bureau

nicipalities added residents while some of the largest municipalities in the county continue to report losses or no increase. The third largest increase in population of 29 residents occurred in La Pointe, the second smallest municipality in the county and not included on the above list.

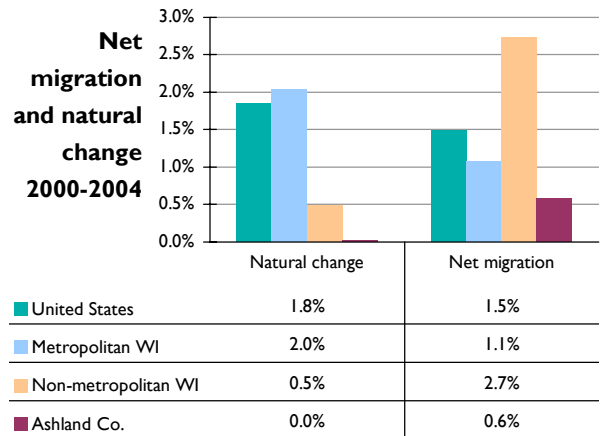
Changes in county population reflect fluctuations in net migration, the sum of residents who move into or leave the county. The current migration rate of 0.6 percent is well below both the rate for other non-metropolitan counties in the state and the state rate of 1.6 percent.

Migration to the county has become the primary source of new residents since the change from natural causes, births minus deaths, has been near zero for many years. Even a fertility rate in Ashland County of 59.3, 29<sup>th</sup> highest in the state and higher than the state fertility rate of 58.7, offers little hope. The number of births in Ashland County cannot keep pace with the number of deaths,

something projected to continue into the future and a trend that was integrated into the population projections for the county.

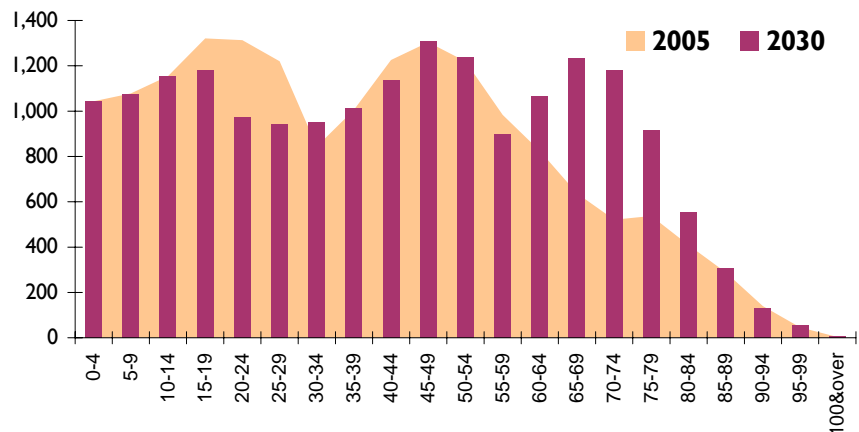
The overwhelming trend in the county is toward an older population that will out-number a younger population. Currently, 20 percent of the population is over 60 years old but by 2030 that share expands to 30 percent. In contrast, 35 percent of the current population is under 25 years old and that shrinks to 30 percent by 2030. One reason for the higher share of population under 25 years is Northland College. Much of this population, however, is transitory. In the future more of the population will shift into the older age categories as illustrated in the bottom graph.

The impact of an aging population is perhaps more obvious in terms of services that they will require. But it also impacts the availability of labor. Assuming that 65 years



Source: WI Dept. of Admin., Demographic Services and U. S. Census Bureau

### Population by Age Groups in Ashland County



Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services

## Future Population and Labor Supply

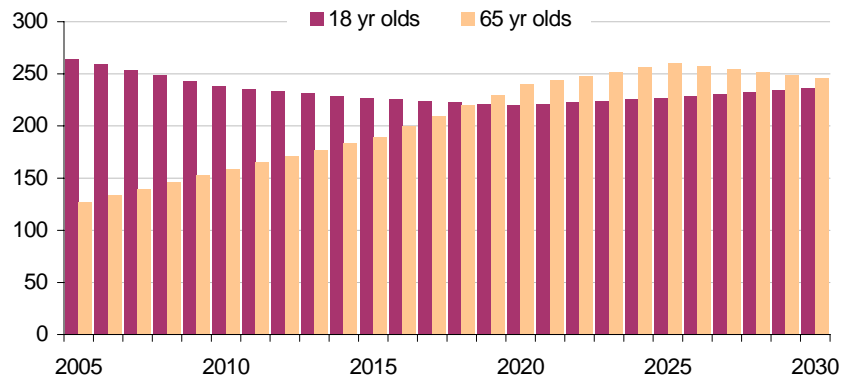
represents an average age of retirement and that 18 years represents high school graduation then a plot of the number of these residents points to a time when the first group exceeds the second group in number. That convergence occurs in 2018 in Ashland County.

As residents age their participation in the labor force declines. Labor force participation rates (LFPR, see glossary) among the population 25 to 50 years of age generally exceed 85 percent in Ashland County. But, after 55 years the LFPR begins to drop and by 60 years it is under 50 percent. The number of residents may increase, but as the population ages the labor force will decline.

The population in Ashland County is projected to increase through 2030 although the additions will be small. However, because a greater share of the population will be over 50 years old, when labor force participation declines, the size of the labor force is projected to decline. The three columns in the chart on the right illustrate labor force composition and size. Most notable is the increasingly larger sections representing workers over 65 years in the top sections.

This projection uses national assumptions that included a slight increase in the participation rates of older residents but did not factor in the declining participation rates of white residents; and, the population in Ashland County is 86 per-

**Convergence of 18 & 65 year old population in Ashland County**

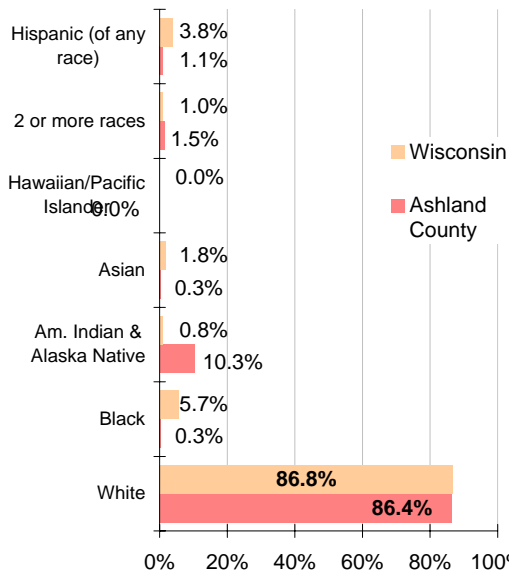


Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services

cent white. The next largest racial group, American Indian, comprises roughly ten percent of the total population and Hispanics account for slightly more than one percent.

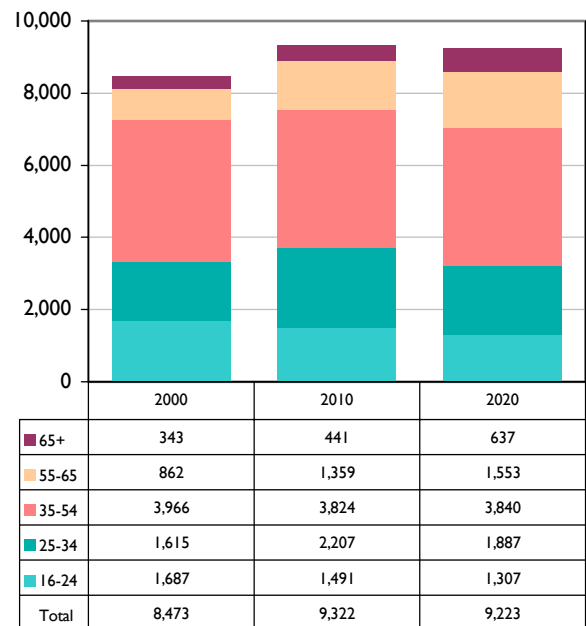
Two broad scenarios arise from the disparity in age and ethnicity: 1) there will be labor shortages due to retirements and the lack of replacement workers especially in occupations that rely on younger workers or require specialized skills; and 2) the aging population will impact the economy as an elderly population demands changes in the types of goods and services provided in local communities.

**Race and ethnic distribution**



Source: U.S. Census Population Characteristics Estimates, 2002

**Ashland County Labor Force Projections by Age**



Decade change	7.5%	10.0%	-1.1%
---------------	------	-------	-------

Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, August 2004

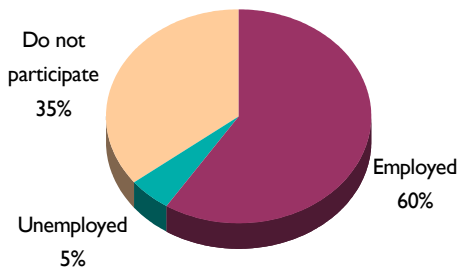
## Current Labor Force

Labor force participation represents the share of population that is 16 years old and older that is either employed or unemployed. Participation rates in Wisconsin and the United States in 2003 were 72.9 and 66.3 percent, respectively.

In Ashland County the participation rate was 64.5 percent. That means that 35 percent of the population 16 years old and older did not participate. That includes some students and individuals who choose not to work including retirees. As

fewer new job seekers to the labor force during the last recession is one of the reasons unemployment rates remained as low as they did. The unemployment rate in Ashland County in 2003 was 8.4 percent compared to a 16.8 percent unemployment rate following the 1981-82 recession when the baby-boomers were entering the labor force in droves.

**Labor force participation in Ashland County**

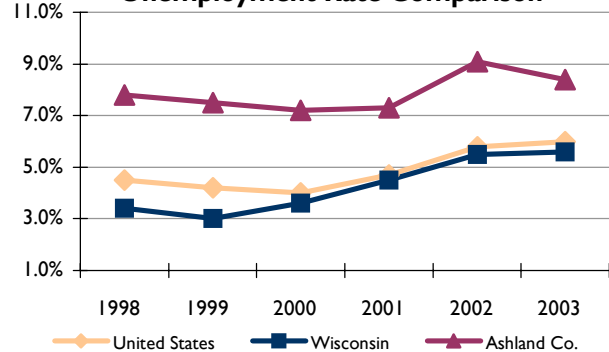


Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, July 2004

the population ages, more retirees will be included in the non-participating category by choosing not to work and the overall labor force participation rate will decline.

There will also be fewer new entrants to the labor force who are seeking first-time jobs and, consequently, fewer included among the unemployed. That, in turn, will produce lower unemployment rates. The fact that there were

**Unemployment Rate Comparison**



**Ashland County Civilian Labor Force Data**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Labor Force	8,036	7,662	8,091	8,319	8,431	8,429
Employed	7,411	7,091	7,506	7,709	7,661	7,718
Unemployed	625	571	585	610	770	711
Unemployment Rate	7.8%	7.5%	7.2%	7.3%	9.1%	8.4%

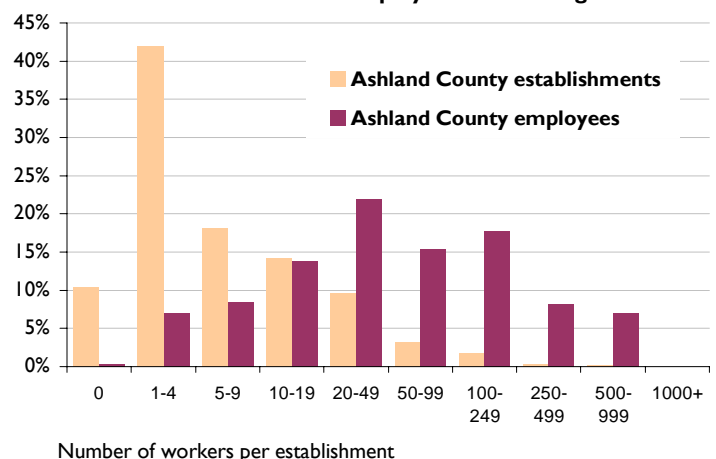
Source: WI DWD, Bur. of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2003

## Employers by Size

Nationwide, about one-quarter of the jobs are with employers that have 250 or more employees compared to roughly 31 percent in Wisconsin. However, of the roughly 8,600 jobs in Ashland County only 15 percent are with employers with 250 or more workers. In stark contrast, the share of employers with 250 or more workers comprises less than one percent of all employers in Ashland County similar to national and Wisconsin distribution.

The greatest share of jobs in the county is with employers in the 20-49 employee range. However, the greatest share of employers, 52 percent, have fewer than five workers. The average employer in Ashland County has 14 employees, compared with 17 employees in Wisconsin and 13 in the United States.

**Share of establishments & employees in size range in 2003**



Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Table 221, July 2004

## Industry & employers by size

Two of the seven employers that provide educational services in Ashland County are on the list of largest employers and one, Northland College, is in the private sector. The second largest industry, however, is entirely in the public sector and includes the largest employer in the county, the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. The largest employer operates several businesses in the county and all are included under this single establishment.

Four industries are part of the larger health care services group and all are on the list of largest industries, pointing to the significance of health services in the county. While the data is suppressed for hospitals, the others, ambulatory health care, social assistance, and nursing and residential care facilities all added jobs in the both the one-year and five-year periods.

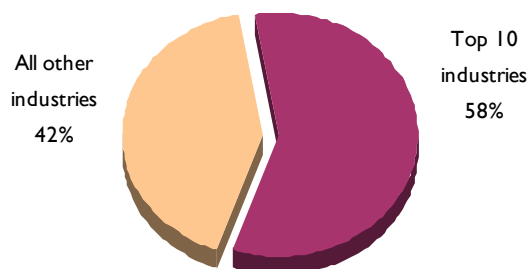
### Top 10 Industries in Ashland County

Industry	March 2004		Numeric Employment Change	
	Establishments	Employees	2003-2004	1999-2004
Educational services	7	873	-17	33
Executive, legislative, & gen government	21	784	16	134
Wood product manufacturing	16	628	17	-29
Food services & drinking places	50	581	-16	55
Hospitals	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Machinery manufacturing	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Ambulatory health care services	34	400	31	76
Social assistance	17	342	58	111
Nursing & residential care facilities	5	316	21	0
General merchandise stores	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.

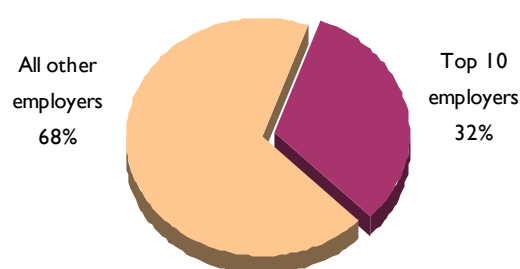
### Top 10 Employers in Ashland County

Establishment	Product or Service	Size (Dec. 2003)
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Tribal governments	500-999 employees
Memorial Medical Centr Inc.	General medical and surgical hospitals	250-499 employees
School District of Ashland	Elementary and secondary schools	250-499 employees
C G Bretting Mfg. Co. Inc.	Paper industry machinery manufacturing	250-499 employees
Wal-Mart Associates Inc.	Discount department stores	100-249 employees
Columbia Forest Products Inc.	Hardwood veneer and plywood manufacturing	100-249 employees
Northland College	Colleges and universities	100-249 employees
County of Ashland	Executive and legislative offices, combined	100-249 employees
Bay Area Home Health LLC	Home health care services	100-249 employees
Birds Eye Veneer Co.	Hardwood veneer and plywood manufacturing	100-249 employees

Share of jobs in top 10 industries in Ashland County



Share of Ashland County jobs with top 10 employers



Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

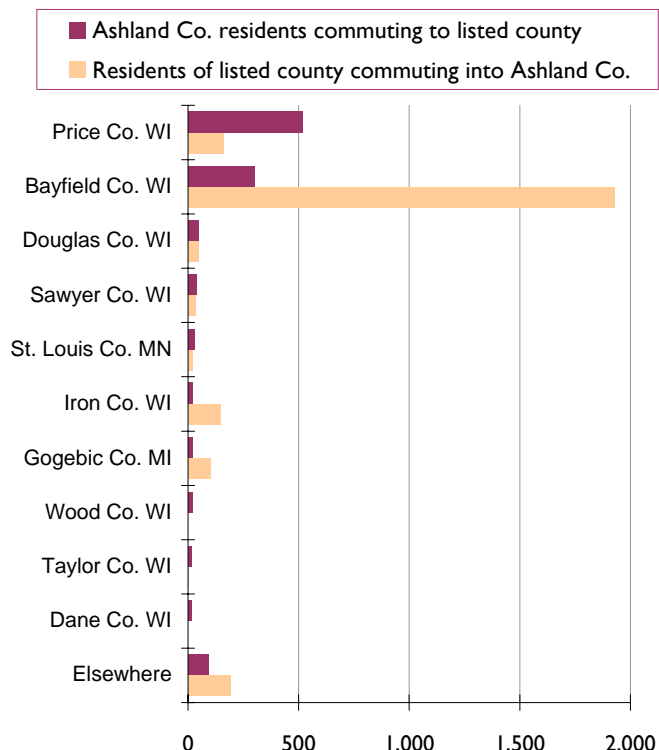
## Commuting

Ashland County gains more workers than it loses to employers in neighboring counties. Roughly 2,630 workers from neighboring counties travel to jobs with employers in Ashland County. Most of those workers, 73 percent travel from Bayfield County, and for the most part, they are headed for employers in the City of Ashland.

Another 246 workers from Iron County (WI) and Gogebic County (Michigan) travel to Ashland County for work and they, too, are primarily headed to employers in the City of Ashland. Workers from Price County, however, prefer to find work with employers in the Village of Butternut which is much closer to home.

Only 15 percent of the Ashland County workforce leaves the county for a job. Of the 1,115 workers who travel to other counties for employment nearly half are headed to employers in Price County. Most of them live in the southern Ashland County and four of every five workers are employed in the City of Park Falls. In fact, more residents from the towns of Chippewa and Agenda and the Village of Butternut work in Price County than work in Ashland County.

Workers who leave the county for employment are still included in the Ashland labor force. More significant though are the workers from other counties that help fill vacancies with local employers.



Source: U.S. Census 2000, Special tabulations: Worker Flow Files

## Key occupations & wages

The jobs in Ashland County share some characteristics with neighboring counties and those similarities were used to define a labor supply area. This list includes wages for some of the occupations with the most employment in that area. It is significant because these 20 occupations provide approximately 19,000 jobs, or 43 percent of total employment, in the combined county area.

Each occupation includes a mean (average) and median (50<sup>th</sup> percentile) hourly wage, probably the most frequently requested wage information. If the mean and median are relatively close, the labor market for that occupation is probably tight.

Eleven of the 20 occupations typically require only short-term training and, for the most part, have a mean hourly wage under \$10/hour. There are also jobs on this list that typically require only moderate to long-term training periods and have mean wages that exceed \$10/hour. Only the two highest paying jobs require college degrees.

Occupation title	Hourly Wages			
	Mean	Percentile		
		25 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup>	75 <sup>th</sup>
Cashiers	\$7.93	\$6.24	\$7.07	\$8.67
Truck drivers, heavy & tractor-trailer	\$17.31	\$12.88	\$17.20	\$20.94
Retail salespersons	\$8.83	\$6.64	\$7.84	\$9.78
Carpenters	\$13.91	\$7.07	\$14.28	\$17.43
Janitors & cleaners, except maids & hskpg. cleaners	\$9.54	\$7.51	\$8.75	\$11.40
Waiters & waitresses	\$8.26	\$6.15	\$7.07	\$8.93
Bartenders	\$7.80	\$7.08	\$7.73	\$8.37
Secretaries, except legal, medical, & executive	\$9.94	\$7.72	\$9.34	\$12.22
Comb. food prep. & serving workers (fast food)	\$7.19	\$6.12	\$6.94	\$8.06
Nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants	\$10.19	\$8.91	\$10.19	\$11.35
Bookkeeping, accounting, & auditing clerks	\$11.60	\$8.94	\$11.58	\$13.75
Office clerks, general	\$9.93	\$7.98	\$9.55	\$11.62
Maids & hskpg. cleaners	\$7.75	\$6.55	\$7.64	\$8.78
Cooks, short order	\$6.77	\$5.88	\$6.41	\$6.94
Personal & home care aides	\$8.73	\$7.91	\$8.71	\$9.65
Automotive service technicians & mechanics	\$15.59	\$11.44	\$16.06	\$19.62
Maintenance & repair workers, general	\$12.57	\$9.16	\$11.96	\$15.28
Sales reps., whls/mfg, except tech. & scientific prod.	\$19.12	\$12.63	\$15.65	\$22.16
Registered nurses	\$21.69	\$18.60	\$20.83	\$24.29
General & operations managers	\$34.27	\$20.21	\$28.43	\$42.93

Ashland County is part of an area which includes Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron, Sawyer, Vilas and Washburn counties.

Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, special tabulation using EDS and OES 2003

## Employment and Wages

From 2002 to 2003 payroll employment in Ashland county increased by 143 jobs, or 1.7 percent while employment in Wisconsin fell 0.2 percent. The largest numeric increase in employment occurred with professional and business services employers with the addition of 131 jobs. Average annual wages, however, are only 53 percent of wages for similar work in the state. The disparity in these wages results from the predominance of clerical occupations locally rather than the higher paying professional occupations found statewide.

The highest wages in construction are paid to only five percent of the workers in the county, while the lowest wages in leisure & hospitality are paid to 10 percent of the county's workers. Several factors influence average wages in industries including occupation composition (professional and technical jobs generally have higher wages than clerical and service occupations), job tenure (those with more seniority are paid more than new hires), average workweek (full or part-time), and seasonal and temporary employment.

The distribution of total payroll and employment for the major industry groups in Ashland County is detailed in the chart below. Education & health services employers, which in

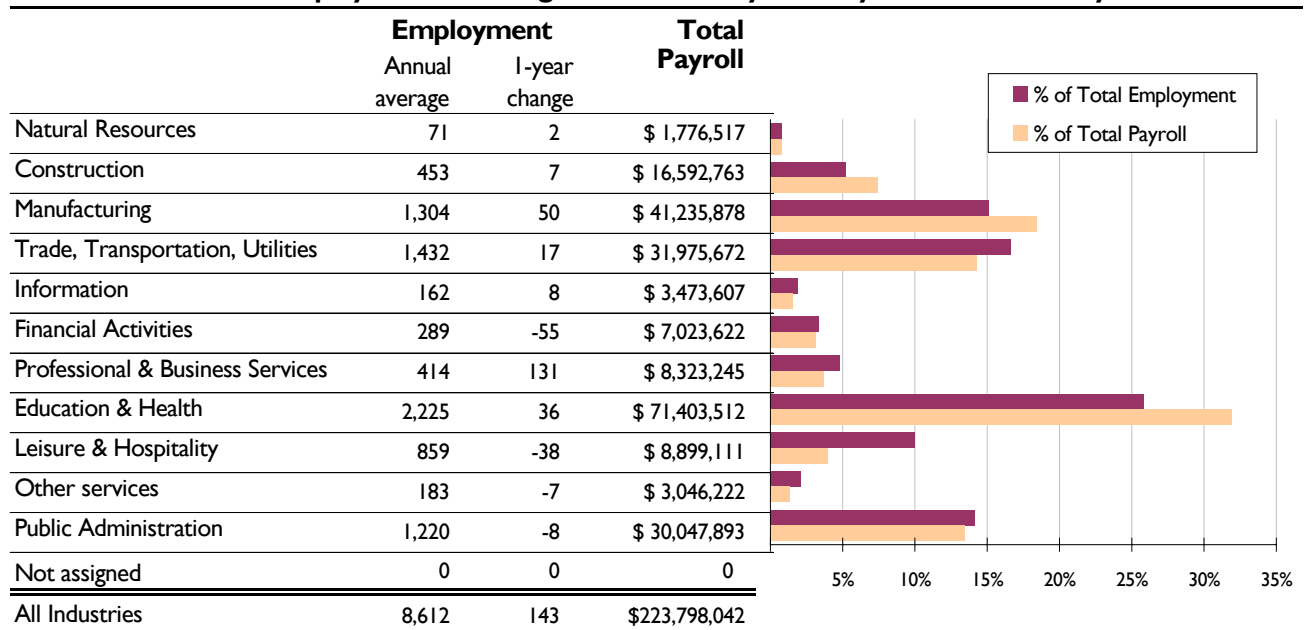
### Average Annual Wage by Industry Division in 2003

	Average Annual Wage		Percent of	1-year
	Wisconsin	Ashland County	Wisconsin	% change
All Industries	\$ 33,423	\$ 25,987	77.8%	2.2%
Natural resources	\$ 25,723	\$ 25,021	97.3%	4.8%
Construction	\$ 40,228	\$ 36,629	91.1%	-2.7%
Manufacturing	\$ 42,013	\$ 31,623	75.3%	6.6%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	\$ 28,896	\$ 22,329	77.3%	2.6%
Information	\$ 39,175	\$ 21,442	54.7%	6.5%
Financial activities	\$ 42,946	\$ 24,303	56.6%	5.2%
Professional & Business Services	\$ 38,076	\$ 20,104	52.8%	-23.4%
Education & Health	\$ 35,045	\$ 32,091	91.6%	2.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	\$ 12,002	\$ 10,360	86.3%	4.6%
Other services	\$ 19,710	\$ 16,646	84.5%	2.9%
Public Administration	\$ 35,689	\$ 24,629	69.0%	1.9%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

this case also includes public education, provides the greatest share, 25.8 percent, of the jobs in Ashland County and has the highest payroll. The second highest payroll is with manufacturing employers. Manufacturing employment comprises 15 percent of all jobs in the county after increasing 4.0 percent in 2003 (manufacturing jobs in Wisconsin declined 4.2%). The average annual wage in manufacturing of \$31,623 exceeds the average for all industries in the county of \$25,987 but is only 75 percent of the average wage received by workers in similar jobs in the state.

### 2003 Employment and Wage Distribution by Industry in Ashland County



Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census Employment and Wages, June 2004



## Per Capita Personal Income

Per capita personal income (see glossary) increased 3.4 percent in Ashland County in 2002, faster than in the United States, Wisconsin and other non-metropolitan counties in the state. Even with the increase, the PCPI in the county is only 77 percent of PCPI in Wisconsin and 75 percent of the United States. The PCPI in Ashland County ranks 55<sup>th</sup> out of 72 counties in the Wisconsin.

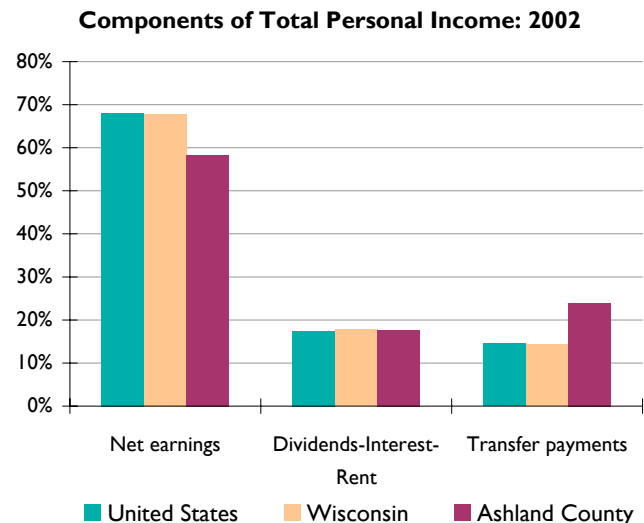
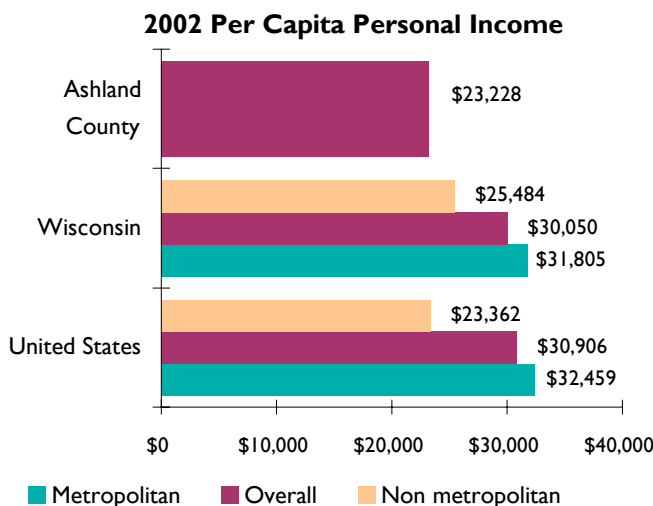
The greatest share of total personal income is net earnings from jobs, both in and out of the county, self-employment and proprietorships. Not only are annual average wages considerably lower than in Wisconsin but net earnings as a share of total

personal income are 58 percent in Ashland County, well below the 68 percent share in both the state and nation. In contrast transfer payments comprise a much larger share of total personal income. Both factors contribute to the lower PCPI in the county.

While PCPI is often used as a comparative income measure it should be remembered that population is also a key component. PCPI is the result of dividing total income by total population. Most income is earned by residents over 18 years old but the younger population is still included in the formula. Likewise, a retired population has a much lower earning capacity.

	Per Capita Personal Income						Percent Change	
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1 year	5 year
United States	\$25,334	\$26,883	\$27,939	\$29,847	\$30,527	\$30,906	1.2%	22.0%
Wisconsin	\$24,514	\$26,175	\$27,135	\$28,573	\$29,361	\$30,050	2.3%	22.6%
Non-metropolitan WI	\$20,734	\$22,195	\$22,900	\$24,059	\$24,833	\$25,484	2.6%	22.9%
Ashland County	\$18,691	\$19,893	\$20,373	\$21,272	\$22,472	\$23,228	3.4%	24.3%
In current dollars (adjusted to U.S. CPI-U)								
United States	\$28,397	\$29,670	\$30,170	\$31,181	\$31,010	\$30,906	-0.3%	8.8%
Wisconsin	\$27,478	\$28,889	\$29,301	\$29,850	\$29,825	\$30,050	0.8%	9.4%
Non-metropolitan WI	\$23,240	\$24,497	\$24,728	\$25,135	\$25,226	\$25,484	1.0%	9.7%
Ashland County	\$20,951	\$21,956	\$21,999	\$22,224	\$22,828	\$23,228	1.8%	10.9%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, May 2004



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 2004

The county workforce profiles are produced annually by the Office of Economic Advisors in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. The author of this profile and regional contact for additional labor market information is:

Beverly Gehrke  
15618 Windrose Lane #108  
Hayward, WI 54843  
Phone: 715-634-5289  
email: [Beverly.Gehrke@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:Beverly.Gehrke@dwd.state.wi.us)



**Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** - A single county or group of counties that include at least one urbanized area with a minimum population of 50,000. Multiple-county MSAs have a central county or counties, which have a high degree of social and economic integration with the other member counties as measured by commuting data.

**Non-metropolitan county** - Any county that is not a member of a metropolitan statistical area.

**Net Migration** - One of two components of population change. It is the net result of individuals who either moved into or out of an area.

**Natural Change** - One of two components of population change. It is the result of the number of births minus the number of deaths in an area over a period of time. A natural increase indicates there were more births than deaths. A natural decrease indicates there were more deaths than births.

**Fertility rate** - Number of live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years.

**Employed** - Persons 16 years of age or older, who worked as paid employees, or worked in their own business, profession or farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise. Includes those temporarily absent from their jobs due to illness, bad weather, vacation, childcare problems, labor dispute, maternity or paternity leave, or other family or personal obligations.

**Unemployed** - Persons 16 years of age or older with no employment, who were available for work and made efforts to find employment sometime during the previous 4-week period ending with the monthly reference week. Persons who were awaiting recall to a job did not need to look for work to be classified as unemployed.

**Labor Force** - The sum of the employed and unemployed, whom are at least 16 years of age and older.

**Unemployment Rate** - The number of unemployed divided by the labor force. It is expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

**Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** - The labor force divided by the total population aged 16 years and older. It is expressed as a percentage of the population aged 16 years and older.

**Suppressed** - Data is withheld or suppressed if it does not meet certain criteria. If an industry in a county has fewer than three employers or if a single employer employs 80% or more that industry's total employment in that county then the data are suppressed. These criteria were established to maintain the confidential reporting of payroll and employment by employers.

**Total Personal Income** - The aggregate income of an area received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements (less contributions for government social insurance), supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts that include retirement and veteran's benefits, government paid medical reimbursements, and income maintenance program payments.

**Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI)** - Total personal income divided by the total population.

**Current Dollars** - Phrase used to express historical dollar values in terms of their current purchasing power via inflation adjustment.

**CPI-U** - Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, the most commonly used measure of inflation in the United States.